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THE U.N. AND ANGOLA

ANNCR: THE UNITED NATIONS IS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF ADMITTING ANGOLA AS A MEMBER. VOA NEWS ANALYST RONALD J. DUNLAVEY DISCUSSES THIS DEVELOPMENT:

VOICE: WITH ONLY THE FORMALITY OF A GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTE REMAINING, THE ADMISSION OF ANGOLA AS THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-SIXTH MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS IS A FACT. ON MONDAY, THE SECURITY COUNCIL VOTED TO RECOMMEND ANGOLAN MEMBERSHIP. AND, UNLIKE THE PREVIOUS VOTE, TAKEN LAST JUNE, THERE WAS NO AMERICAN VETO.

THIS CAME AS A SURPRISE TO SOME PEOPLE. THEY EXPECTED THAT WASHINGTON WOULD ONCE AGAIN BLOCK ANGOLA'S APPLICATION ON THE SAME GROUND AS BEFORE--THAT THE PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA WAS "WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION IN A TRULY INDEPENDENT AFRICAN STATE." AND IT IS WELL-KNOWN THAT SOME TWELVE THOUSAND CUBAN TROOPS ARE STILL IN THE COUNTRY, ENGAGED IN THE INTENSIVE FIGHTING WHICH IS REPORTED STILL GOING ON IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND GUERRILLA FORCES.

BUT ACTUALLY THE UNITED STATES HAD INDICATED SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER THAT IT WOULD NOT USE THE VETO AGAIN TO BLOCK ANGOLAN MEMBERSHIP. AN AMERICAN SPOKESMAN WAS REPORTED AS TELLING A CLOSED MEETING OF SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS THAT WASHINGTON WOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF ANGOLA'S ENTRY. AND WHEN IT CAME TO A VOTE THE UNITED STATES, ALTHOUGH NOT VOTING FOR MEMBERSHIP, DID IN FACT ABSTAIN.

NATURALLY, THIS SHIFT IN POSITION TOUCHED OFF A GREAT DEAL OF SPECULATION ABOUT THE REASONS FOR THE AMERICAN CHANGE. CERTAINLY THE UNITED STATES IS STILL DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT

THE CUBAN PRESENCE; AMBASSADOR WILLIAM SCRANTON MADE THIS CLEAR AT THE TIME OF THE VOTE. "THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO JUSTIFICATION," HE SAID, "FOR SUCH A LARGE FOREIGN ARMED PRESENCE IN AN AFRICAN STATE. IT IS HARD TO RECONCILE THE PRESENCE OF A MASSIVE CONTINGENT OF CUBAN TROOPS WITH THE CLAIM THAT ANGOLA ENJOYS TRULY INDEPENDENT STATUS."

MR. SCRANTON, HOWEVER, DID ALSO INDICATE THE REASON FOR THE AMERICAN DECISION NOT TO USE THE VETO. IT WAS A DECISION MADE, HE SAID, "OUT OF RESPECT FOR THE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY OUR AFRICAN FRIENDS." MOST OBSERVERS SEE IN THIS A REITERATION OF THE AMERICAN POSITION THAT THE AFRICAN NATIONS SHOULD HAVE PRIMACY IN SETTLING AFRICAN AFFAIRS. AND, IN THEIR VIEW, THESE SAME AFRICAN NATIONS--INCLUDING ANGOLA--CAN EXERCISE A BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE IN BRINGING THE CURRENT RHODESIAN NEGOTIATIONS TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE UNITED STATES DECISION NOT TO VETO ANGOLA'S APPLICATION HAD WIDER IMPLICATIONS. IT WAS AN EXPRESSION OF CONFIDENCE IN AFRICAN RESPONSIBILITY FOR HANDLING AFRICAN AFFAIRS--AND AN EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT THIS SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE APPLIED TO ALL THE TROUBLED AFFAIRS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

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